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MONEY-MAKERS.

MANKIND may be divided roughly into two classes—those who understand money, and those who do not. The first of these possess all the real power in the world; the second are subordinates, servants, slaves. The ability to make money, to keep money, and employ it to the owner's advantage, is a very remarkable gift, and is displayed more by the Teutonic-Celtic races than by the other families of the earth. It is an ability too which is largely increasing. It is the secret of the masterful influence of Europe upon the other continents, and the basis of an ever-widening civilisation. The English have long been the money-makers *par excellence*. Yet so far, a comparatively few have made wealth and kept it. The majority have passed through existence without winning more than a small share, and the lot of others has been hopeless poverty. The common state now is that in which people just manage to discharge their financial obligations to society. Expenditure devours income as night follows day. These good folks neither live beyond their means, nor under their means, but fully up to them. They are too honest or too proud to be in debt; but they lack the money-keeping faculty.

There is another class whose characteristics are alien to the dominant type. They are financial imbeciles. Whatever be their circumstances, they will live beyond them. The bitterest lessons leave them uncorrected. While they have money, they must spend; while they can get credit, they will avail themselves of it. Nay, many of them are only happy when in debt, and continue to be embarrassed under all precautions. Were all mankind like them, harvests would be unknown, for they would devour the seed-corn. Left to themselves, a life of vagabond savagery must be their inevitable fate. These are the people who bring ancient families to degradation and extinction, who scatter the hoards of millionaires, who im-bitter the lives of relatives and friends, and who are shipped to the colonies by droves. Those of

them who are born among the poorer classes sink to the lowest depths. When they work, it is at the rudest employments, and by fits and starts. Even under the inexorable constraints of our triumphant industrialism, the financial imbeciles contrive to lounge through life, and often enjoy it more than the toilers and savers. But their numbers are perceptibly dwindling; public opinion has banned them. The multiplication of machines for doing the rough work of mankind is continually taking away their means of subsistence; the recruiting-sergeant is beginning to disdain them; the policeman gives them no rest; the relieving-officer is their mortal enemy; and the School Board makes captives of their children. The money-makers have made up their minds to get something out of the financial imbeciles, or to abolish them altogether.

During the past fifty years, the money-makers have been so marvellously busy, and so successful, that they may almost be pardoned for the indignation they feel towards those who see the golden river running through the land, and yet will not take the trouble to catch a pailful. The money-makers have built the railways; for without their capital and their cupidity, the locomotive must have remained an inventor's dream. They have brought the telegraph out of the savant's study to make Time a laggard and Space a negation. Their steam-fleets circumnavigate the world. The roar of their factories and foundries and the myriad new industries they have organised in all parts of the earth, booms like a hymn of conquest day and night. They have metamorphosed old Britain, and they are busy in re-shaping the whole earth and the destinies of mankind. Already the tide of wealth has swept away many of the old social landmarks; and as it rises into higher waves, it portends such changes that the shrewdest thinkers cannot grasp their full significance. It is said that the annual income of Great Britain amounts to two thousand millions sterling, and that two hundred millions are yearly added to the already stupendous mass of British capital. Such figures declare what is

being done by the 'nation of shopkeepers.' There is no people like us in money-making and money-keeping. We hear much of French thrift, of German frugality, of Swiss economising. But notwithstanding much wastefulness and ignorance, our race surpasses all others in money-matters.

The national aptitude becomes more marked from year to year. Good times and bad times make it equally more pronounced. When a period of depressed trade occurs, there is a general outcry against unthriftiness and foolish spending. The tendency for money-getting becomes feverishly acute; and the knowledge that less is being made, and consequently less stored, rouses the preservative social forces into high activity. The sin of spending unduly is denounced on every side; the duty of taking care of what we have is sternly insisted upon; and clamorous multitudes of unemployed work-people are told that they deserve the privations they are enduring, because they did not lay by for the rainy day which has come upon them. And the working-class from pondering these words are beginning to see *their* interests in a new and strange light. With each period of hard times, the national proclivity increases; and some think that if Old England continue to maintain her integrity for a few generations longer, spendthrifts and impecunious blunderers may be almost eliminated from her society.

Although the money-making and money-keeping class is as yet the least numerous amongst us, it is rapidly increasing. This is proved by the seventy-six millions deposited in the savings-banks, a sum which is fifty per cent. greater than it was ten years ago. But this by no means represents the invested savings of the humble classes. It is impossible to say how many millions sterling are sunk in the Building Societies of the country, but the aggregate must be immense. Almost every large village has one of these societies, and in great towns they exist in dozens. Besides these, there is a constant increase of Co-operative institutions, in which large sums of capital are employed to the mental and material advantage of the owners. Lately, there has been a notable growth of industrial undertakings, whose shareholders are composed of operatives and small-shopkeepers. By some of the great manufacturing firms, the work-people are invited to place their savings in the concern; and for these they receive a *pro-rata* profit.

One of the most remarkable symptoms of a general advance in prudence and thrift is the enormous number of Insurance associations which have arisen in the past twenty-five years. A man of the middle-class is now looked upon as in a degree selfish if he does not provide for the wants of his family even beyond the grave. All heads of families are expected to insure their lives, and for substantial amounts. The superior artisans are alive to their duty in this matter; and the lower ranks of labour have created some of the strongest and most skilfully planned Assurance

corporations that are to be found. So profound is this tendency to prepare for the inevitable catastrophes of life, that it has penetrated to the very depths of our social system. By means of Burial Societies, the poorest assure themselves and the members of their household for the few pounds which will place them decently in the grave. The Sick Clubs, and other prudential and saving associations, are in their way further evidences that the people are becoming money-savers, and that time is only needed to make them money-makers. Assurance against calamity in any form is merely sparing from the abundance of to-day, that it may be enjoyed to-morrow, should it be needed.

The total thrift of the humbler classes and lower middle-class, could it be known, would do much to reassure those who take a despondent view of the British future. From what is going on before our eyes, it is evident that the preservative instincts of our race are developing, and they imply a growth of intelligence and self-mastery. So long as this continues, we need not fear foreign competition in trade, nor the hostile combinations of warlike states. The energy, the foresight, the financial understanding of the masses seem to be greater than at any previous period. Their stake in the country is always increasing. Though this is pre-eminently the age of millionaires, and though for some time to come the drift of business will aggregate great wealth round a limited number of individuals, yet the number of modest fortune-holders is ever greater. There is now an immense public of independent people with incomes ranging from one hundred to a thousand pounds a year. They have risen from the ranks of labour, from the professions, and from the adventurers who find fortune beyond the seas.

Turning from these cheering facts to what may be termed the dark side of things, many will doubtless exclaim: 'But what about British pauperism! Can a country which is burdened with a million of destitute people, be really prospering? Do not the lucky ones thrive at the expense of the others?' In reply to these questions, it must be admitted that pauperism is truly gigantic. The existence of a million of beggars is both a disgrace and a danger, which must be combated as the first of national duties. And pauperism is being combated as it never was before. In the past ten years it has declined nineteen per cent. Thus, at the end of 1869, the number of paupers was 1,281,000; while at the end of 1879, the number had fallen to 1,037,000, and this during a period of industrial retardation. Pauperism is one of the heirlooms of the old Feudal period. Then society comprised two classes, the Patrons and the Patronised. There was then no disgrace in being dependent. Under our industrial régime, patrons have disappeared; but the habit of dependence still exists in certain sections of society; hence the hereditary pauper. With the ceaseless removal of the peasantry into the towns; with emigration to other lands; with the constant increase of mechanical apparatus for cultivating the soil, the dependent class diminishes; and its extinction is as sure as that of the old type of feudal barons or the monastery almoners. But one of the effects of rustic immigration into the great centres of industry has been to swell the volume of pauperism whenever trade was depressed.

Directly the ex-peasant was out of work, he threw himself and family on the parish with as little shame as he threw off his coat. Then the demoralising influences of courts and alleys tended to degrade him and his children; he could not always resist the public-house; and the gutter was the only playground. With the changes now going on, it is to be hoped that pauperism will be reduced much both in quantity and in degree. As yet, however, the abject condition, the drunkenness, the vice and squalor to be seen in the large, and also in some small towns, are most disheartening. Fortunately, the nation is alive to the supreme importance of sanitary law. It recognises the necessity of providing the working-class with resorts for obtaining wholesome refreshments and amusement. It has decreed that education shall be universal. These are all direct aids to thrift, and therefore must diminish pauperism.

But the working-class has come to recognise that it can be dependent no longer. The reproaches it has listened to during hard times, have sunk deep into the minds of its leaders. They now clearly perceive that the age of Patronage is gone utterly; and that for the future, workmen must rely wholly upon themselves. From this have sprung the Trades-unions. Labour, in recognising its true position in the world, has found that it has rights to defend. Independence is forced upon its acceptance, and it must adjust itself to it. The first fruits of this are the accumulations in the Savings-banks; the second, the Building Societies; the third, the Industrial corporations, whose shareholders are likewise the operatives. These exhibit the progress of the working-class in financial intelligence. The Savings-banks give a small return upon capital; but the principal is absolutely safe, a matter of supreme importance to the poor. The Building Societies pay interest from five to six and a half per cent.; and where the management is sound, their capital is beyond peril. Industrial corporations pay dividends of from ten to even twenty per cent., and employ the shareholders.

But that which accrues from these enterprises is not altogether a money advantage; there is besides, among the working-classes, a broadening of the knowledge of the science of trade. By the fluctuations that affect their own investments, they are coming to understand that masters and capitalists are not arbitrary despots who make things cheap or dear as they please. Prices fall and rise in building investments and in industrial corporation shares. Profits increase and diminish, and no skill or sacrifice can avert the latter when a great wave of depression sweeps over the world of trade. The knowledge of economical law will elevate the workmen into a calmer region of thought, and make trades-unions less despotic. For the conduct of many has been as arbitrary as ever capitalists themselves were supposed to be. Useless strikes will cease; and the result will be a further gain to masters men and the commonwealth, in prosperity and social ease.

The fevered competition of our time is a conspicuous symptom that the middle-class are alive to the importance of money-matters. Strife for wealth is not a new mode of civil war, as pessimists allege. Nor is it caused by a brutish indifference to everything external to our selfish interests. It springs from modern conceptions of the philosophy

of life. Parents toil to make a comfortable provision for old age. And it is well to call attention to this, as being one of the new ideas of the time. Formerly, parents found an asylum in the home of certain of their children, often with the eldest son or daughter. Filial piety accepted the duty with a kindly reverence. But now the spirit of independence is so paramount amongst us, that parents cannot endure the thought of living upon their children. At the same time they are not less considerate for their children's future. They not only seek fortune for themselves; they seek to place their sons on the road to opulence, and to dower their daughters. Money-grubbing, as it is called, is not always indulged in from a desire of accumulation, to minister to sensual pleasures, to make a dash in the world of fashion. In the majority of cases, wealth is sought by the middle-class to secure its possessor against the agonies and despairs of a mean estate. The dread of poverty and patronage makes fathers plod, makes mothers economise, makes sons exercise self-restraint, and daughters become useful in the kitchen and sewing-room. The wish for easy circumstances does more to foster the return of old English home-life, with its attendant virtues, simplicities, and tranquillities, than all the other 'aids to improvement' that are operating upon the middle-classes. The ideals now are monetary independence, frugality, and industry. Those who witness the arrival of the twentieth century will find what these ideals have accomplished.

Its clear understanding of money-matters has made Britain the mightiest nation the world has known. From this have sprung our empire and our diffusive civilisation. We have the wit to find wealth in all places and in all things. We have found it in these stormy islands, above ground and under ground and beyond the seas that tumble round us. Intellect directing our toil, has turned all we have touched into gold. Intellect has taught us how to make our possessions secure by law at home and by valour abroad. Our liberties, our kindnesses, our sympathetic humanity are largely due to skill in money-finding and money-keeping. And this skill is Nature's gift to our race, by which we penetrate her secrets and turn them to beneficent ends.

THE CRUISE OF THE WASP.

CHAPTER IV.—DISCOVERY OF THE WRECK— SEARCH FOR THE PROA.

THE schooner's guns were drawn inboard, her ports closed, her hammock-nettings removed; and by means of various devices, we endeavoured to make her resemble as much as possible one of the ordinary coasting-vessels which trade amongst the islands; while in order to check her speed, if we should be fortunate enough to fall in with the proa, and lure her to give us chase, an old sail was sewn up like a bag, so that it would hold water, and placed ready to be thrown over the quarter at any moment, and towed astern. These preparations completed, we put the vessel about, and steered towards the land we had lately left behind us. For three days we sailed along the

shore of the island of Papua, from the western entrance of Torres' Strait to its most northerly point, narrowly examining every bay and creek as we passed them by, without perceiving any signs of the object of our search, or even seeing a single vessel of any description. Then we stretched out to sea to a distance of fifty or sixty miles, spoke three or four merchantmen, none of whom had seen anything of the proa; and having acquainted them with the information we had derived from Post Office Island, left them to pursue their course. Thus ten days passed away; and feeling satisfied that no such vessel was on the west coast of the island of Papua, we rounded its north-western cape, and sailed along the entire length of the north coast to Dampier's Strait—a distance of nine hundred miles; still to no purpose. By this time we had made up our minds that the proa had either returned to her haunt amidst the islands of the archipelago, or that we had been the victims of a silly, heartless hoax. Nearly three weeks had been thus wasted; and vexed and disappointed, Lucan determined to give up the apparently useless search, and proceed on his voyage to Singapore. Scarcely, however, had he come to this determination, when the man on the look-out aloft hailed the quarter-deck, and reported a vessel close inshore, under the high land.

'What does she look like?' asked the young Lieutenant.

'So far as I can make out, she is a full-rigged ship, sir,' replied the sailor; 'and if I ain't mistaken, she's aground on the beach.'

The schooner was steered closer inshore; and Lucan and I hastened aloft with our spy-glasses, and soon perceived that the report was correct. This was a disappointment; for we made sure that we had caught the proa at last. It was now seven bells—half-past seven o'clock A.M.—and the crew had just been piped to breakfast; but when the order was given to run down towards the disabled ship, the breakfast was forgotten, and all hands were astir in an instant. As the schooner drew near the shore, we saw that the vessel was a small barque of about three hundred tons burden. She lay on her beam-ends on the beach, with her masts inclining shoreward, and with her keel actually out of the water. That she had been deserted by her crew, or that they had been massacred, or carried off by the barbarous natives of the coast, was evident; and after taking every precaution against surprise, by bringing the schooner's guns to bear upon the beach, Lucan ordered two boats to be lowered, and each manned by six armed seamen. The boats then pulled for the shore, the Lieutenant taking command of one, and I of the other. Not a living creature was to be seen when we landed on the beach; and no response being made to our hail, we clambered on board the ship, and discovered at a glance the nature of the mishap that had befallen her. She was a French vessel, the *Marguerite*, of Marseilles, which had been attacked and plundered by pirates, and whose crew had been ruthlessly murdered. The sight that met our eyes when we gazed around was indescribably horrible; and though no corpses were to be seen—the pirates, as is customary with them, having thrown their hapless victims overboard—the decks were smeared with blood. That the attack had been very recently made was manifest from the fact that in

those places where the struggle had been most fierce, the blood-stains were not yet dry upon the deck.

On our descending into the cabin—a difficult task, as indeed it was to move about the decks, by reason of the inclined position of the ship—one of the sailors who preceded Lucan and me, uttered a cry of horror as he stumbled and fell over a body—that of the Captain of the vessel, or of a passenger, to judge from his dress, or rather from that portion of his attire which had not been removed, for he was in his shirt-sleeves; and his neckcloth had evidently been violently torn off, thus rendering it more easy for his murderer to inflict the frightful wound that had deprived him of life. The body was still warm; and being that of a tall, stout, heavy man, the pirates probably had not cared to take the trouble to carry him upon deck and throw him over the ship's side. In his right hand he still grasped the hilt of a sword, the blade of which was broken off; thus shewing that he had fought desperately to the last. But never shall I forget the fearful sight that we were now compelled to look upon! Here, below, as upon deck, there had been a dreadful struggle for life; but in the cabin, the confined space rendered the sight more terrible. The floor, the walls, the furniture, and even the ceiling bore marks of the dreadful fray; the chairs, the tables, the mirrors, and the lamps which had swung from the ceiling, had been thrown down and broken; and almost every article that was portable had been carried off. A writing-desk, and a cash-box with the lid wrenched off, lay in one corner—the contents of both having been abstracted, though one of the sailors picked up a Spanish doubloon, two French louis, and a Mexican dollar, which had rolled away and escaped the notice of the plunderers. But the most pitiable sight of all to our eyes were the numerous articles of female attire, which together with some long dark-brown hair, evidently torn from a woman's head, lay torn and strewn about the floor. Some of these articles and remnants were those of a grown woman; whilst others had belonged to a child, a pair of whose purple-morocco slippers—apparently those of a little girl of ten or twelve years of age—were found in one of the state-rooms.

'Who and what were these hapless females, and where are they now?' we asked ourselves. 'Were they the wife and child of the unfortunate Captain of the ship, or of one of the male passengers?' of whom, as we judged from various articles of male attire that were scattered about the beds in the state-rooms, as well as from other tokens, there had been three or four on board the vessel. It was impossible for us to say; but it was terrible to surmise what had been—or what might be—the fate of these helpless females.

The chronometers, sextants, barometers, everything of value that could be easily removed, had been carried off, and evidently so recently, that it was impossible that the perpetrators of this ruthless act of piracy could be far away. We no longer doubted whether the dreadful deed had been the work of the savages of the coast or of pirates. It was manifest that the plunderers had known the value of the articles they had carried off. Moreover, they had destroyed or thrown overboard the log-book, as well as every paper or

record from which we might have been able to ascertain the name of the port to which the vessel was bound, as well as the names of her Captain, passengers, and crew. The name of the ship and that of the port to which she belonged, were painted across her stern; and this was all that we were able to ascertain concerning her, except that she was ballast-laden; and, as we surmised in consequence of finding scattered over the ballast a few articles of cheap jewellery, cutlery, glass beads, and other such-like nick-nacks, which had evidently fallen from some broken package, she had carried above her ballast a few packages of French fancy goods, wherewith to trade with the natives of the islands. The wholesale slaughter might have been equally the work of pirates, or of the savage Papuan islanders, supposing the ship to have gone on shore through accident or stress of weather; but the systematic plunder of articles of the value and use of which ignorant savages would be quite unacquainted, and the wholesale destruction of all books and paper, were beyond doubt the work of pirates, and as we believed, of the crew of the proa of which we had been in search.

There is nothing on earth that a true sailor hates with such deadly hatred as a pirate, or a shark. To catch the latter, a sailor will any day cheerfully forego his hammock, or give up his ration of fat salt pork, wherewith to bait the hook. To wreak vengeance upon a pirate, a man-of-war's-man will willingly go upon short allowance of food and water for a month, and risk his life into the bargain. The sailors who accompanied Lucan and me on board the barque, were horror-struck at the sight they beheld; but when, on his return to the schooner, Lucan displayed upon the capstan-head, to the assembled crew, the torn and blood-stained articles and remnants of articles of female raiment, which, together with the handful of long dark silky hair, evidently that of a female, he had brought on board, the fierce yell of execration that burst forth simultaneously from all hands was fearful to hear! With one voice they instantly besought their youthful commander to renew his search after the perpetrators of the brutal atrocities of which these relics were the shocking memorials.

Whoever these might be; whether or not they were—as we believed—the crew of the proa, of whose presence off the coast of New Guinea we had received information at Post Office Island, it was certain that they could not be far away. But a few hours could have elapsed since the cruel act of piracy was committed; and though we had no doubt that all the men on board the hapless vessel had been murdered, we thought it probable that the females had been carried off by the pirates, and might still be living. We could render no service by remaining longer by the French vessel, which we had overhauled from stem to stern without finding any record of the name of her Captain, or of any one else who had been on board, or that of the port to which she was bound. Not only had the contents of the desks, drawers, and other receptacles in the cabin been abstracted or destroyed, but the chests of the petty officers and seamen in the orlop-deck and fore-castle had likewise been rifled of everything of the slightest value they had contained. The work of plunder and destruction had been terrible

and complete. The name of the vessel and of the French port to which she belonged, were all that we had been able to discover, except that, on a closer examination of the articles of female apparel—an examination which long afterwards led to strange disclosures—we perceived the letters 'M. F. L.' marked in scarlet silk on the skirts of two of them.

Five minutes after our return to the schooner, we were again sailing along the shore, searching narrowly into every nook and creek, but still in vain; and four more days passed away without our having made any fresh discovery. We had carefully concealed the schooner's ports by means of a rough coat of paint. Our guns, already loaded, were covered over with tarpaulings; the crew were never allowed to be all upon deck at the same time; the yards and sails were less carefully trimmed than is usual on board a vessel of war, and every conceivable device was employed to disguise our real character—but all, apparently, to no purpose. At length, early in the morning of the fifth day, we again doubled the north-west Cape of New Guinea—Lucan feeling undecided whether to continue the search, or to proceed without further delay to Singapore, and report what had occurred to the Admiral of the station. While he was still consulting with me, the lookout aloft hailed the quarter-deck and reported a vessel close inshore, under the land.

'What like is she?' asked the Lieutenant.

'I can't make her out under the shadow of the land, sir,' the sailor replied, 'but she looks suspicious-like.'

Lucan hastened aloft with his spy-glass. In a few minutes he hailed the deck. 'Brace sharp up, M—, and stand in along-shore,' he cried to me.

I gave the necessary orders; and in another minute the schooner was standing southward along shore, close-hauled to the wind.

Lucan remained aloft five minutes longer, and then descended to the deck. 'Tis she—the proa! We've trapped her at last,' he exclaimed excitedly as he came aft.

'Are you sure?' I eagerly inquired.

'Certain,' he replied. 'She lies in there—pointing out the direction—deep in the shadow, under yon high land; just such a craft as the skipper's letter described. We ought to make her out from the deck.'

We both looked through our spy-glasses; but the shore was indented at this spot, and the shadow cast upon the water was so dark that for some moments we could see nothing. At length I fancied I discerned the outlines of a vessel's low hull, and at this moment the man aloft cried: 'She's moving out, sir!' And in a minute or two, as she crept forth from the shadow, we saw her distinctly bearing down towards us, with her sweeps out.

'Heave the log!' shouted Lucan.

A light breeze—just enough wind to set the sails to sleep, as sailors say—was blowing dead off the land, which was about two miles distant, and the sea was smooth as glass; yet when the log was hove, we found that our smart little craft was making good two knots an hour.

'Ah!' exclaimed Lucan, 'when the little *Wasp* has her wings spread, I believe she'd make headway in a dead calm. We must check her speed somehow. Heave the sail overboard.'

The sail, sewed up in the form of a bag, to which I have already alluded, was thrown over the quarter, and left towing astern. The log was again hove, and we found that the vessel's speed was reduced to a single knot an hour.

'That's better,' said the young Lieutenant.—'What are they doing on board the proa now?' he shouted to the man aloft.

'They 'pear to be resting on their sweeps, sir,' the sailor replied.

'The cowardly scoundrels!' muttered Lucan. 'We must leave them to come out after us.—Brace her up a bit closer if you can, Harris.'

A fresh pull was given to the sheets, and the vessel's prow was brought a point further round towards the shore. Then—as if we had but that moment espied the proa—the foreyards were squared, men were sent aloft to loose the foretop-gallant-sail and royal, which had hitherto been furled; and under a press of canvas, we bore away before the wind. The ruse was successful. Believing that we were striving to escape from them by running out to sea, the Malays again tugged at their sweeps, and bore down towards us.

'Deck ahoy!' shouted the man on the look-out aloft.

'What is it, my man?' asked Lucan.

'There's two on 'em, sir,' was the reply.

'Two what? Two proas?'

'Ay, sir; t'other one's just come out from the shadder.'

'All right. The more the merrier,' cried Lucan. 'Though'—addressing himself to me—'two at a time is more than we bargained for.'

'We can manage them both,' said I.

'Yes,' replied Lucan. 'But the fellows fight desperately when brought to bay. One of them may escape. I'd rather have fallen in with them singly.'

The schooner's crew were in such a state of excitement, that it was only with great difficulty they could be prevented from shewing themselves upon deck all together; and we knew that the least thing calculated to awaken suspicion, would cause the pirates to relinquish their chase.

As we got farther out from the land, the breeze freshened, and the water began to grow rough. The sweeps were hauled in on board the foremost proa, and she continued her chase under sail; the second proa, likewise under sail, being now visible from the schooner's decks. There could be no mistake about them. There were the long, low, black hulls, the tall raking masts, and the huge lateen sails, just as described by the master of the *Roxburgh*. One was nearly a mile astern of the other; but though they gained upon us rapidly, so swift was the little *Wasp* that, had we not taken measures to check her speed, she could easily have distanced the proverbially swift-sailing proas, now that we had got into rough water. In another hour, the foremost proa was, we believed, within range of our guns. But anxious to capture both vessels if it were possible, we allowed her to approach still nearer, until her consort was likewise within range of our shot. The decks of both vessels were crowded with men. I estimated that there were at least two hundred men on board the two proas.

At length we judged that the right moment had arrived. The signal was given for all hands to appear upon deck and was eagerly answered.

The ports were thrown open, the guns were run out, the schooner's upper sails were furled, her foretop-sail was hauled up, and she rounded to, upon her pursuers. These manœuvres were so quickly effected that the pirates were evidently taken by surprise. The hindmost proa was instantly hove-to; but the foremost still approached until Lucan gave the order to fire the port bow gun. The shot was fired over the proa, as a sign for her to surrender; and falling into the sea far astern of her, it ricocheted over the water for a considerable distance before it finally disappeared. The rascals, however, refused to take the hint; but having discovered their mistake, and knowing that they could hope for no mercy if captured, they endeavoured to run alongside the schooner, with the intention of boarding her and overpowering us by numbers. We, however, had no notion of allowing a hundred or more murderous desperadoes to approach too near us. A second and a third shot were fired point-blank at the proa, and both took effect. The yells of her crew were audible above the reports of the guns; and when the smoke lifted, we saw that one shot had struck the vessel amidships, just below the water-line; and the other had carried away her foremast, which had fallen across her deck, burying several of her crew beneath the heavy lateen sail.

The Malay proas never carried heavy guns. In fact, the concussion caused by the fire of a large gun would have torn open their bamboo decks. The pirates trusted mainly to the chance of boarding the vessel which they hoped to make their prize, and using their keen-edged, sharp-pointed creeses with deadly effect upon the crew. However, while the men who had been borne down by the weight of the foresail struggled to free themselves, several muskets were fired at us from the afterpart of the vessel, but without effect, the shot all falling short into the water. Meanwhile, the proa—evidently settling down—was drifting nearer and nearer to us; but a third well-directed shot from the little *Wasp* struck her on the bow, raking her fore and aft, and starting both her after-masts, which fell over her side. She now lay completely at our mercy; for her cowardly consort, seeing how matters were going, had borne away northward under all sail, escaping us completely at this time.

Several of the crew of the sinking proa had jumped or had fallen overboard, and were swimming towards us; and we on board the *Wasp* were in the act of lowering our boats, that we might be prepared for any emergency, when suddenly the whole of the forepart of the proa burst into flames. She had either been purposely set on fire by some of her desperate crew, or probably some lamp or cooking-stove had been broken or capsized, and in falling had set fire to the dry, inflammable materials of which she was constructed. In a few moments she was enveloped fore and aft in one wide sheet of flame, and ere long, nothing remained save the charred and blackened portions of her bamboo deck, to which some of her crew were clinging, while others were seen swimming around in every direction.

Having seen to the safety of our own vessel, the boats were now pulled towards the struggling Malays and Chinamen—for the crew of the proa was composed of villains of both races—with the

object of saving as many lives as possible for the present, in order that the wretches might meet their well-merited doom elsewhere. The two old petty officers, however, raised their voices against any such attempt.

'They won't thank us for savin' on 'em,' said the boatswain's mate. 'And why should they? They knows as how they'll be hanged, if so be they're took ashore.'

'And that's just how I'd like to see 'em sarved out, Mr Gorman,' said one of the sailors. 'Drownin's too easy for the likes o' them.'

'Look out that they don't drive their creeses into yer, my lads, put in the gunner's mate. 'I've heerd of their doin' that afore now. Maybe that's the thanks ye'll get for draggin' 'em out of the water.'

But Lucan was not to be turned from what he regarded as his duty, by the warnings of either Harris or Gorman, and the men were ordered to save as many as they could of the struggling wretches. The pirates, however, refused to accept our assistance. They struggled and fought with the sailors who attempted to save them, or dived under the boats and swam away. Many of them had already sunk beneath the water, and others were sinking all around—probably those who had been wounded by the shot fired from the schooner, or by the splinters which the shot sent flying in every direction. One miserable wretch whose cheek had been laid open by a splinter, proved that the gunner's mate had not given his warning without reason. The poor wretch, who was making a last desperate struggle to keep himself afloat, was dragged on board the pinnace by a young sailor, who placed him in the stern-sheets of the boat, apparently in a state of unconsciousness, and was then turning away. 'Look out, Joe! look out, lad!' cried one of the men on board another of the boats. The young sailor heard the warning, and started aside; but he was too late. The dying Malay raised himself up with a last effort of his strength, and drawing his creese from his belt, stabbed the sailor in the side, and then flung himself over the boat's stern, and sank to rise no more. The young fellow was immediately taken on board the schooner, where the wound was bound up. Fortunately, the Malay had not sufficient strength left to inflict a very deep wound, or the poor youth would surely have lost his life. As it was, several weeks elapsed ere he was able to return to his duty. Several others received slight wounds and scratches while endeavouring to lift the drowning Malays into the boats, and at length we were compelled to leave the desperate wretches to their fate. The boats were recalled to the schooner; but before they could be hoisted on board, every one of the proa's crew had disappeared beneath the waves. Nothing save a few charred spars and pieces of bamboo remained floating on the water.

One of the boys belonging to the *Wasp*, who was aloft when the second proa bore away and left her consort to her fate, declared that he saw the flutter of a woman's dress on board the vessel. The lad was positive in his assertion; but it received little credence from any one on board the schooner; though, from what came to light many months afterwards, it is probable that he spoke the truth.

We now made the best of our way to Singapore

without further delay, and arrived at that port at the end of seventeen days, without having met with any fresh incident worth recording. As we entered the roads, we saw a large ship lying at anchor off the fort, with the Admiral's flag flying at the fore; and while Lucan and I were seeing to the clewing up of the schooner's sails, and making other preparations for bringing her to an anchor, one of the men shouted from aloft: 'Boat coming off from the Admiral's ship, sir!'

Lucan looked through his glass at the advancing boat, which was pulled by six oarsmen, and steered by a coxswain. 'As I live! the old chap himself,' he irreverently exclaimed. 'What can bring him aboard in such haste? I hope the old fellow hasn't heard at what date we sailed from Sydney!'

THOMAS CARLYLE.

It is one of the disadvantages of those who are the contemporaries of any great man, that they are not so favourably situated as are subsequent generations for knowing him, and forming a true estimate of his character and his work. For example, we actually know less of Tennyson and Froude and Sala, than we do of Swift and Addison and Pope. Of Thomas Carlyle, we are equally ill-informed; and Mr Froude, we daresay, has no fear of his prophetic reputation when he says regarding the 'Sage of Chelsea,' that 'a hundred years hence perhaps people at large will begin to understand how great a man has been amongst them.'

Not much is known of Carlyle's parents, but what is known of them is highly favourable. He himself calls his father the 'remarkablest man he ever knew.' He rented a small farm, and afterwards a larger, at Ecclefechan, Dumfriesshire. He had great energy and decision of character, and was more than ordinarily intelligent; possessing, it is said, an extensive vocabulary of words, which, as we see in the case of his distinguished son, has not been lost in the family. He was an elder in the Kirk, on good terms with the minister, and hoped at one time to have seen his son Thomas in the high places of the Kirk too. His end was somewhat unexpected, he having died suddenly while Thomas was in London negotiating for the issue of *Sartor Resartus*. His mother, like the mothers of many great men, was a woman of more than ordinary sagacity and penetration; and to this it is said is to be attributed much of that shrewd instinct, and caustic insight into character, which marks the writings of her son.

Carlyle, who was born on the 4th December 1795, received his education partly at the parish school of Ecclefechan and partly at Annan, entering Edinburgh University before he had completed his fifteenth year. Here he studied hard in classics and mathematics, and read extensively and assiduously in all kinds of literature. Through too close attention to study he injured his naturally robust health; and speaking to the Edinburgh students in 1866, he sounded a very serious warning to them on this point. Designed by his parents for the Church, a change of views when he was twenty-one made this impracticable. We next find him teaching mathematics in the burgh school of Annan; and thereafter classics and mathematics at Kirkcaldy. Towards

the end of 1818 he again appeared in Edinburgh, with no definite prospects before him, but with decided leanings towards literature. He executed translations, wrote for the reviews and magazines, and fairly began his literary career. In 1826 he married Jane, daughter of Dr John Welsh, Haddington, and a lineal descendant of John Knox. She was a remarkable woman; taught herself Latin while but a girl; and was in the habit when a child of secreting herself under her father's table, so that she might listen to the philosophic and learned conversation that passed between him and his friends. Settling in 1828 at Craigenputtoch, Dumfriesshire—a property belonging to his wife—Carlyle devoted his whole time to literature; *Sartor Resartus* and the remarkable essay on Robert Burns, being part of the fruit of this solitude.

A letter written to Goethe in 1828, from Craigenputtoch, revealed the simple life which he led in that region, with its lonely surroundings. The neat substantial dwelling stood far away from any populous neighbourhood, being fifteen miles north-west from Dumfries; but two ponies which they possessed carried the author and his wife whither they would. Here he had come to simplify his mode of life and remain true to himself. 'This bit of earth is our own,' he remarks; 'here we can live, write, and think as best pleases ourselves.' On his library table was piled a cart-load of French, German, American, and English journals and periodicals. Writing to De Quincey in December of the same year, he remarks: 'Such a quantity of German periodicals and mystic speculation embosomed in plain Scottish peat-moor being nowhere else that I know of to be met with. . . . We have no society, but who has, in the strict sense of that word? I have never had any worth speaking much about since I came into this world. . . . My wife and I are busy learning Spanish; far advanced in *Don Quixote* already. I purpose writing mystical reviews for somewhat more than a twelvemonth to come; have Greek to read, and the whole universe to study (for I understand less and less of it).'

During the visit which Carlyle made to Scotland to discharge the duty in connection with his appointment as Lord Rector of Edinburgh University in 1866, the sad intelligence reached him of the sudden death of his wife in London; and few things of the kind are finer than the epitaph, which he caused to be placed on her tombstone in the family burying-ground at Haddington: 'Here likewise now rests JANE WELSH CARLYLE, spouse of THOMAS CARLYLE, Chelsea, London. She was born at Haddington, 14th July 1801, only child of the above JOHN WELSH and of GRACE WELSH, Caplegill, Dumfriesshire, his wife. In her bright existence she had more sorrows than are common, but also a soft amiability, a capacity of discernment, and a noble loyalty of heart which are rare. For forty years she was the true and loving help-mate of her husband, and by act and word unweariedly forwarded him as none else could in all of worthy that he did or attempted. She died at London, 21st April 1866, suddenly snatched away from him, and the light of his life as if gone out.'

Ralph Waldo Emerson found him at Craigenputtoch in 1833, and described him as 'tall and gaunt, with cliff-like brow, self-possessed, and

holding his extraordinary powers of conversation in easy command; clinging to his northern accent with evident relish; full of lively anecdote, and with a streaming humour, which floated everything he looked upon.' They discoursed pleasantly of books and philosophy, and Emerson accidentally discovered that his aspirations were directed towards London, whither he removed to Cheyne Row, Chelsea, in the following year.

Between the years 1837-40, Carlyle delivered four sets of lectures, only one of which—*Heroes, Hero-worship, and the Heroic in History*—has been published. These lectures created a great sensation in literary circles, and were delivered to crowded and select audiences. Charles Sumner, who heard him, declared that 'he seemed like an inspired boy; truth and thoughts that made one move on the benches came from his apparently unconscious mind, couched in the most grotesque style, and yet condensed to a degree of intensity.' Harriet Martineau, who had something to do with the arrangements for these lectures, did not consider them very successfully delivered, owing to his unconcealed nervousness, and the fact that he did not seem to enjoy his own efforts. These public appearances he termed in a sportive vein 'my day of execution.' As utterances, however, they are probably among the most notable of these times; but except in 1866, when he addressed the Edinburgh students, he has not again appeared in this capacity.

It was some time before Carlyle became certain of having caught the ear of the public to any adequate extent. Even so late as 1837, he was not without his doubts; perhaps not at all times free from despondency. In his *Life of Sterling*, he mentions a visit which he made to the latter in the autumn of that year, when 'from a shelf, I remember,' he says, 'the good soul took down a book modestly enough bound in three volumes, lettered on the back *Carlyle's French Revolution*, which had been published lately; this he with friendly banter bade me look at as a first symptom, small but insignificant, that the book was not to die all at once. "One copy of it at least might hope to last the date of sheep-leather," I admitted; and in my then mood the little fact was welcome.' In July of that same year, John Stuart Mill had reviewed *The French Revolution*. 'This is not so much a history,' he began, 'as an epic poem; and notwithstanding, or even in consequence of this, the truest of histories.' Mill, in his *Autobiography*, expresses his belief that the early success of this work of Carlyle's was much accelerated by what he said of it in the *Westminster Review*. 'Immediately on its publication,' he explains, 'and before the commonplace critics, all whose rules and moods of judgment it set at defiance, had time to preoccupy the public with their disapproval of it, I wrote and published a review of the book, hailing it as one of those productions of genius which are above all rules, and are a law to themselves.' In 1839, yet another tribute of high praise, mingled with clear and candid criticism, appeared in the same magazine, this time from the pen of John Sterling. 'What its effect on the public was,' says Carlyle, 'I knew not, and know not; but remember well, and may here be permitted to acknowledge, the deep silent joy, not of a weak or ignoble nature, which it gave to myself in my then mood and

situation; as it well might.' Upon his publication of *The Letters of Cromwell* later on, he discovered that he had at last found due recognition, and was surprised at the swiftness with which the first edition was bought up. And these historical works deserved to succeed; for, apart from all other literary excellences, they were the honest productions of a diligent hand. No one who examines and compares them with other histories bearing on the same period and events, but must acknowledge the careful sifting of facts, the minute attention to accuracy of detail, which everywhere distinguish these writings of Carlyle.

In passing his *French Revolution* through the press, his patience was sorely tried, a misfortune having befallen him similar to that which befell Isaac Newton. Carlyle had lent the manuscript of the first volume to John Stuart Mill, who carried it to Mrs Taylor, the lady whom he afterwards married. By some strange accident, it was left exposed, and a stupid servant lighted the fires with it. When the author heard of this misfortune, he was like a man beside himself, as there was scarcely a page of the manuscript left. Sitting down at the table, he strove to collect his thoughts, and began to rewrite, but only to run his pen through each page as it was finished. Doggedly persevering, however, Carlyle finished the volume at last, after five months' labour. To Thomas Aird, who met him in Dumfriesshire afterwards, he said that in his opinion the second effort was better than the first.

In 1844, we printed in this *Journal* an admirable letter addressed to a young man by Carlyle, on a proper choice of reading. Wise letters of his are continually coming to light, weighted with thought, experience, and kindly sympathy. As a rule, he has not been afraid to tell the truth, and make a plain statement of facts to his correspondents. In many respects, in quality if not in quantity, he stands alone as one of the most notable correspondents of this generation. In answer to Dr Carlyle of Toronto, who had been seeking advice as to improving himself in his profession of school-teacher, he wrote a letter, in which he enforced diligence and patient energy in the acquirement of any subject; knowledge gained by personal exertion being far more productive than if a teacher had helped. He quoted the instance of Cobbett learning French while his fellow-soldiers were drinking and idling; and of his own brother John who learned Latin with little outside help. The books read in the hours of relaxation must not be fools' books. 'A very small lot of books will serve to nourish a man's mind, if he handle them well; and I have known innumerable people whose minds had gone all to ruin by reading carelessly too many books. . . . The wisest men I have known in this world were by no means great readers—good readers, I should rather say, of a few books that were wise, having an abhorrence of all books they found to be foolish. A man gathers wisdom only from his own sincere exertions and reflections, and in this it is really not very much that other men can do for him.' Carlyle's reading, apart from the immediate subject of his investigations or studies, is said to be confined to a few good books, the newspaper holding a very subordinate place. His library is one of the smallest that ever belonged to a great man of letters, which is explained by the fact of his

magnificent memory; a book once read is to him as a sucked orange, to be thrown aside.

Carlyle has not only made his mark on his own times as an essayist and historian, but also as a conversationalist of the first rank. His talk, like his books, throws a lurid if somewhat one-sided light on a subject. His tongue has still the 'sough' of Annandale about it—'a keen, sharp, singing voice, in the genuine Border key, and tranquil and sedate withal, neighbourly and frank, and always in unison with what is uttered.' Harriet Martineau thought his sympathetic mood the finest, and that excess of sympathy had been the master-pain of his life. Margaret Fuller declared that he 'sings rather than talks. He pours upon you a kind of satirical, heroic, critical poem, with regular cadences.' In conversation, he allows his mind to follow its own impulses as the hawk follows its prey; and he generally bears down all opposition.

There is some humour in the story related by Miss Martineau, that Carlyle, dissatisfied with his house at Cheyne Row, went forth one morning on a black horse, with three maps of Great Britain and two of the world in his pocket, to explore the area within twenty miles of London, for a more suitable residence, yet stuck to his old house after all. The same authority indicates that his health has improved under growing public recognition, although whether this has anything to do with the improvement, may be questioned. In the correction of proofs he is exceedingly fastidious, revise following revise. Owing to this weakness, Miss Martineau offered to see the first reprint of his *Miscellanies* through the press, and thus save unnecessary expense. He declined, however; and coming in one day from his printer's in Charing Cross, he was laughing prodigiously, having enjoyed the following joke all the way from the printing-office. In urging on the printer, that worthy had replied: 'Why, sir, you really are so very hard upon us with your corrections! They take so much time, you see!' The author urged the plea that he must be accustomed to that sort of thing, and that he had got such work done in Scotland. 'Yes, indeed, sir,' interrupted the printer. 'We are aware of that. We have a man here from Edinburgh; and when he took up a bit of your copy, he dropped it as if it had burnt his fingers, and cried out: "Mercy on us! have you got that man to print for? Lord knows when we shall get done—with all his corrections!"'

Carlyle doubtless owes his healthy longevity to the strict habits of temperance and exercise maintained throughout his career. Besides walking, he was at one time fond of omnibus riding. While his *Life of Friedrich II.* was in progress, he declared that he rode in this way twice round the world. A walk before breakfast is part of his daily programme. Work commences after breakfast; his working hours are short, generally from half-past ten or eleven till two. The afternoon is devoted to exercise, either that of a walk with an old friend or an omnibus ride. The interesting commemoration of his eightieth birthday in the shape of a gold medal and an address presented to him by a wide circle of admirers, and by a gathering of friends in Germany, will be fresh in the memory of most readers. A remarkable old man, both in his physical

vitality and his intellectual vigour, still looking abroad upon the world out of those cavern-like eyes, regretting our follies, pitying our misfortunes, and deeply sympathetic with all forms of sorrow. May he in those latter days enjoy the rest which his life of laborious industry has so amply earned for him!

SOME CURIOUS EPITAPHS.

PLAYING with language, experimenting on the meanings of words, punning on duplicate or triplicate significations, giving a sarcastic rub to those who are no longer in a position to return the favour, displaying ignorance in attempts to manifest wit—are more abundant in the preparation of *Epitaphs* than the world generally supposes. All is not solemnity and sorrow in the thoughts of the concoctors of these effusions.

Sometimes a pun or play on the name is introduced: such as in the epitaph on John White:

Here lies JOHN, a shining light,
Whose name, life, actions, all were White.

The following was rather epigrammatic than epithetic, in regard to the Rev. John Chest:

Beneath this spot lies buried
One Chest within another;
The outer chest was all that's good:
Who says so of the other?

William Wilton, buried in Lambeth, certainly did not write the epitaph which bears relation to him:

Here lyeth W. W.,
Who never more will trouble you, trouble you.

Nor, we may safely assert, did Owen Moore himself pen the following:

OWEN MOORE is gone away,
Owin' more than he could pay.

More likely to be genuine are those epitaphs which involve a bit of bad logic, syntax, or grammar in their composition. In a graveyard at Montrose is said to be the following:

Here lyes the bodies of GEORGE
YOUNG and all their posterity
For fifty years backwards.

And in Wrexham churchyard as follows:

Here lies five babies and children dear,
Three at Oswestry, and two here.

Akin to this in logical blundering is:

Here lies the remains of
THOMAS MILSOLM, who died in
Philadelphia, March 1753;
Had he lived he would have
Been buried here.

And another at Nettlebed in Oxfordshire:

Here lies Father and Mother and Sister and I;
We all died within the space of one short year;
We be all buried at Wimble, except I;
And I be buried here.

Others, again, are delightfully circumstantial, such as that on John Adams:

Here lies JOHN ADAMS, who received a thump,
Right on the forehead, from the parish pump.

Or a touch of jollity in them, as this from Newbury churchyard:

Here lays JOHN, with MARY his bride—
They lived and they laughed while they was able,
And at last was obliged to knock under the table.

Or suggestively laconic, as in the following from Saint Michael's, Crooked Lane:

Here lies, wrapped in clay,
The body of WILLIAM WRAY;
I have no more to say.

Sarcastic epitaphs, not necessarily involving a pun on the name are, we suspect, seldom to be found really engraved on tombstones; and only in some cases written by relations of the deceased. If Dryden really wrote the epitaph on his wife, attributed to him, and which he intended for her tombstone, had he outlived her, he must indeed have felt and owed her but little affection:

Here lies my wife; here let her lie;
She's now at rest, and so am I.

One Mrs Shute gave occasion, we are told, for the following:

Here lies, cut down like unripe fruit,
The wife of DEACON AMOS SHUTE;
She died of drinking too much coffee,
Anny Dominy eighteen forty.

James Wyatt of course took no part in the concoction of this effusion:

At rest beneath this churchyard stone
Lies stingy JEMMY WYATT;
He died one morning just at ten,
And saved a dinner by it.

The occupation of a dyer has suggested many epitaphs of an obvious character, such as:

He dyed to live, and lived to dye.

Also:

He died himself, and dyed no more.

So many jokes were fired off at the late Sir William Curtis—an alderman distinguished for defective education and bad grammar—that we need not feel surprised at an epitaph couched thus:

Here lies WILLIAM CURTIS,
Our late Lord Mayor,
Who has left this here world,
And gone to that there.

A useful hint is wrapped up in the following:

Died of thin shoes, January 1839.

Many epitaphs seem to be intended to enlighten the public on some point which the friends

of the deceased deem of importance. An epitaph on Ann Jennings of Wolstanton, tells us that

Some have children, some have none ;
Here lies the mother of twenty-one.

A double epitaph records the mournful tale thus :

Here lies two brothers by misfortune surrounded ;
One died of his wounds, the other was drowned.

A fatal disaster could hardly be recorded in briefer form than the following :

Here lies JOHN ROSS,
Kicked by a hooss.

Nor could a religious sentiment have been more curly and sarcastically expressed than as under :

Here lies the body of GABRIEL JOHN,
Who died in seventeen hundred and one ;
Pray for the soul of Gabriel John—
If you don't like it, you can let it alone ;
'Tis all the same to Gabriel John,
Who died in seventeen hundred and one.

Many mechanical trades give rise to the use of technical terms which, by a little manipulation, may be made applicable to human life, states of health, disease and decline, death and its surroundings. When such is the case, epitaph-makers are strongly tempted to make use of the verbal materials thus placed at their disposal. Any one can see, for example, how the trade of a brewer gives rise to the words—ale (hale), stout, beer (bier), bitter, porter, cooper, and in what manner they can be worked up for gravestone purposes. A playing-card-maker suggests cut, shuffled, game, dealt, honours, counting, tricks, &c. The brick-maker supplies the epitaph-compiler with clay, fire, half-burned, remoulded. A mechanical engineer employs technical terms which may be easily transferred to some of the conditions and events of human life : set up, valves, engine, stopped, boiler, hot-water, coked, flame, guiding-wheels, whistle, clock, steam. To the blacksmith we are indebted for hot, cool, cold, ashes, forging, vice, blowing, hiss, anvil, hammer, sparks, bellows, temper, and the phrase 'strike while the iron's hot.' From the weaver can be borrowed thread, web, warp, woof, weft, pattern, check, crossed, fustian, garments. The cobbler tells of his all (awl), sole (soul), stall, last, welt, elastic ; while the tailor is equally ready with suit, skein, thread, twist, shears, surt-out, staytape, pressed, remnant.

The trade of a printer is very prolific in terms which can in this way be utilised for epitaphic purposes. Such for example as volume, book, page, print, delivered, press, author, founder, leaf, title, augmented, corrected, contents, cover, lettering, binding, gilding, form, imposing, bed, matter, copy, type, distributed, imprint, impression, pye, worn-out character, recast, mould. Nor is that of a watchmaker much less so : as witness the technical terms and phrases vertical, horizontal, wound up, regulated, set going, hours, moments, time, maker, key, period, go wrong, mainspring, outer case, works, pivot, pinions, jewelled, stopped.

If we are to accept as genuine all the epitaphs copied into the printed collections, many examples exist of these applications of trade technicalities

to gravestone purposes. One is attributed to Benjamin Franklin, relating to himself, but with a blank left for the date of death : 'The body of BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, printer—like the cover of an old book, its contents torn out, and strip of its lettering and gilding—lies here, food for worms. Yet the work itself shall not be lost ; for it will appear once more in a new Edition, corrected and amended by its Author.' Another, said to have been suggested for but not by this famous printer-philosopher-statesman, depends for such merit as it possesses on an ingenious use of some of the types or characters employed by printers : 'BENJAMIN FRANKLIN, the * of his profession ; the type of honesty ; the † of all ; and although the ‡ of Death has put a . to his existence, each § of his life has been without ||.'

The epitaph on the driver of one of the Aylesbury coaches was so managed as to bring in the coaching terms journey, whip-hand, way-bill, account, drive, stage, and 'shew you the way.' Lord Byron is credited with an epitaph on an old neighbour of his near Newstead :

JOHN ADAMS lies here, of the parish of Southwell,
A carrier, who carried his can to his mouth well ;
He carried so much, and he carried so fast,
He could carry no more, so was carried at last.
For the liquor he drank, being too much for one,
He could not carry off, so he's now carri-on.

When the celebrated General Wolfe died, a premium was offered for the best written epitaph on that brave officer. A number of poets of all descriptions entered the competition, and among the rest was one who addressed his communication to the editor of the *Public Ledger*, as follows :

He marched without dread or fears,
At the head of his bold grenadiers ;
And what was more remarkable—nay, very particular,
He climbed up rocks that were quite perpendicular.

Perhaps the most unexpected of all epitaphs are those in which the mourning relatives of the deceased endeavour to make a little money out of their grief, or to convert their sorrow into a little bit of trading or shopkeeping. We must acquit the dead man of any participation in the manœuvre ; the epitaph is written when he is no longer in a condition to criticise it ; and his poor bones are made ancillary to a trade advertisement.

Take the following as an example : 'Here lies the body of JAMES HAMBRICK, who was accidentally shot in the Pacus River by a young man ; with one of Colt's large revolvers, with no stopper for the hammer to rest on. It was one of the old-fashioned sort, brass mounted ; and of such is the kingdom of Heaven.' Or the following : In one of the cemeteries near Paris, a small lamp some years ago was kept burning under an urn over a grave ; and an inscription on the gravestone ran thus when translated into English : 'Here lies PIERRE VICTOR FOURNIER, inventor of the Everlasting Lamp, which consumes only one centime's worth of oil in one hour. He was a good father, son, and husband. His inconsolable widow continues his business in the Rue aux Trois. Goods sent to all parts of the city. Do not mistake the opposite shop for this.'

A tapster at Upton-on-Severn certainly had an

eye to the main chance, if he really inscribed the following epitaph on his father's gravestone :

Beneath this stone, in hope of Zion,
Doth lie the landlord of the Lion ;
His son keeps on the business still,
Resigned unto the Heavenly will.

And not less so an American stonemason, who made the same tombstone serve the double purpose of a mortuary memorial and a trade advertisement : ' Here lies JANE SMITH, wife of THOMAS SMITH, marble-cutter. This Monument was erected by her husband as a tribute to her memory, and as a specimen of his work. Monuments in this style, two hundred and fifty dollars.'

The lady to whom is attributed one graveyard effusion, had her thoughts unquestionably directed, if not to trade and shopkeeping, at least to matrimonial possibilities : ' Sacred to the Memory of JAMES H. R——, who died August 6th, 1800. His widow, who mourns as one who can be comforted, aged twenty-four, and possessing every quality for a good wife, lives at ——.'

We have in an earlier paragraph ventured on a surmise that some epitaphs have never gone beyond the limits of pen and ink, and cannot be trusted as veritable examples of graveyard literature. Mr Shirley Hibberd, an industrious collector of epitaphs, corroborates this view. He says : ' Are there not hundreds of epitaphs in print which have no existence except as printers' paragraphs ? I have collected epitaphs for years past ; and it is surprising how many (and those some of the best in a literary sense) defy every attempt to trace them to sepulchral sources.'

The French are more prone than ourselves to indulge in these imaginary gravestone compositions ; owing perhaps to the great epigrammatic power of their language. One of their epitaphs gives a rub at the Academie Francaise, evidently out of favour with the concocter : ' Here lies PIRON, who was nothing, not even an Academician.' Fontaine, in one part of an epitaph attributed to him, described himself as having disposed of his time very easily ; seeing that he divided it into two portions, one for sleeping, and one for doing nothing. An epitaph on a prodigal declares that he delighted in *not* paying his creditors ; the only debt he ever paid was the debt of Nature. One reason assigned for a husband honouring his deceased wife with a tombstone was because ' the last day of her life was the first of his happiness.' An epitaph on Cardinal Richelieu declared that ' Here lies a famous Cardinal, who did more harm than good ; the good he did he did badly ; the bad he did he did well.' An epitaph on Rousseau pronounced that his life had been too long by just one half : ' for thirty years an object of admiration, for the other thirty an object of commiseration.' Of a humpback or *bossu* we are told that ' as he had carried a burden on his back all his life, he deserved now to have a rest.'

Notwithstanding these literary witsters, there can be no question of the genuineness of numberless epitaphs. They for the most part belong to the weak side of human nature. The display of small vanities ; the unconscious manifestation of ignorance ; the thirst for strokes of humour, regardless of the contingencies of time and place ; the tendency to punning and displays of wit ; the yearning to ' push' for trade and

profit even at the side of the grave ; the flattering conceit of seeing one's own literary productions permanently graven on stone—all enter into the account.

ICE-BOATING IN CANADA.

FROM A CANADIAN CONTRIBUTOR.

THE comparative mildness and shortness of the winter in Great Britain precludes us from enjoying many sports which might otherwise be indulged in on our lakes and rivers. We have to a limited extent, skating and curling, but have never been able to achieve the delightful sensation of sailing on the ice. In America and Canada, where the winters are long and severe, things are different. There, sleighing is an exceedingly common mode of transit by land ; while ice-boating is an exhilarating recreation on the frozen lakes and rivers. Furnished with a sail of formidable dimensions, and running on skates several feet in length, the American ice-boat as it is now constructed, is capable of attaining a velocity of more than a mile a minute ! And further, it can by an arrangement of the sail and the skilful handling of the rudder, be made to glide in any direction that is not directly or almost directly in the teeth of the wind.

From a Canadian contributor, who claims to have been one of the first to make ice-boating a special study, we have the following interesting notes. He says :

Ice-boating is one of the most exciting and exhilarating amusements that Canada can boast of ; and I trust I may be excused from the charge of egotism if I say that I was the first person who about forty-eight years since made it a special study. Since that time, the Americans have given equal if not greater attention to this sport, and have attained perhaps fully the same speed. My object was to reduce to a minimum the resistance on the ice, consistent with insuring a proper grip for the steel skates on which the boats run. The result was that having secured a minimum of leeway, I finally attained a speed of sixty-five miles an hour when sailing with the wind on the quarter.

In Canada we have abundance of ice and cold weather. Snow, however, while it remains on the ice destroys the power of attaining great speed, and we are obliged to wait the intervals of thaws before we can again use the boats to the best advantage. I do not mean to assert that the boats always travel at the rate of sixty-five miles an hour ; but thirty or forty miles is not at all above the average. After a thaw has removed the snow, or before snow falls, numerous ice-boats are to be seen dashing over the surface of the frozen water with wonderful velocity ; ' on a wind' close hauled within four points ; or with the ' wind abeam ;' or before it ' round and round in circles,' ' backwards and forwards,' they are running in all directions. I have myself sailed continuously round and round in a large circle,

each time in turn coming in stays, and off on the other tack, jibing as the boat got before the wind. There are but few serious accidents to record, and the wonder is there are not many more. No one is afraid, and if sufficient watchfulness is exercised, no mishap need occur, the boats are so perfectly manageable, and are under the complete control of the helmsman. When two boats on different tacks meet, moving at the rate of even thirty miles an hour, they seem to approach each other with wonderful speed. The least turn of the rudder, and in an instant the course of one or both is altered, and they fly past one another like birds.

Ice-boats are constructed in the form of a triangle, formed by placing one plank lengthwise and a second across one end; the two angles thus formed being filled up with light lattice-work to accommodate passengers. At each end of the cross plank large blocks of oak are firmly bolted. The skates, which are nearly three feet long by perhaps eight inches deep, are inserted in a groove about two and a half inches deep, cut lengthwise in the oak block, and parallel with the centre of the longitudinal plank. These ice-boats always sail the broad end foremost. Near the end of the longitudinally placed plank, a hole about two and a half inches in diameter is bored. This hole is strengthened above and below by other transverse pieces, also perforated in a similar manner. These holes receive the rudder-post. To the upper end of the post is attached an ordinary boat's tiller; and to the lower end an oak block similar to the others, is firmly morticed. Lengthwise in this block is cut a groove, like that in the skate blocks, into which a third skate, between two and three feet in length, is fastened. And now comes the last great improvement, by means of which I found myself placed at an advantage against all competitors, other points being equal. The three skates are all supported sideways by the grooved block of oak, and are kept in their places by one bolt; the use of this single bolt being to allow the skate to oscillate on this one centre, so as to accommodate itself to any inequalities in the ice. It will be seen, therefore, that when one skate may be surmounting a small excrescence on the ice, the moment the sloping bow of the skate touches it, a slight rise takes place in the front part, which thus readily glides over the obstacle; whereas, if the skate were rigid and could not rise, it would be compelled to cut itself through the first opposing edge of the obstruction.

To cause the skates to hold in the ice without slipping to leeward, each skate is bevelled towards the inside; whereas the rudder skate is similarly slightly bevelled from both sides towards the centre, thus affording sufficient hold to steer the boat, by cutting a very small groove in the ice. Each skate and also the rudder are a little rounded on the lower edge, perhaps a quarter or three-eighths of an inch in three feet. The plates are a quarter inch thick, and burnished and polished at the edge as smoothly as possible.

The sail that I invariably found to be the best

was large and triangular, similar to that used by the flying proas of the Indian seas. It is well known these sails lie nearer the wind than any other. I added a boom to the long pliant yard, and attached the two firmly together at the bows. As the sail was lashed to both boom and yard, and the yard hauled up and the boom hauled down, the sail was as flat as a board. There is never more than one sail on each boat; but sometimes the boom is as much as thirty feet long, and the yard a few feet longer. These large boats, however, would never do on thin English ice, as the pressure would be too great; though a much smaller boat could sail wherever a man could skate, and would form an amusing novelty for English yachtsmen.

I recollect one day, many years since, myself and two friends had invited the then Governor-general, his wife, and some of her friends, as well as His Excellency's staff, to enjoy an ice-boat sail on Toronto Bay. At that time, but few citizens thoroughly understood the management of these boats; but fortunately I was perfectly conversant with it, having, as before said, made ice-boating a study. I had lent a friend—a Mr Munro—one of my boats, giving him strict injunctions how to manage her. He was a good yachtsman; but the speed of these boats so far exceeds that of ordinary sailing-vessels, that the greatest care is requisite, especially when two boats are approaching on different tacks; and having ladies and the representative of royalty on board, we were extra careful to guard against accident. On the day alluded to the ice was in splendid order. There had been steady hard frost without snow, and the ice was about six inches thick, and perfectly 'glare' and free from cracks. The whole bay—about two by four miles—was completely frozen over. All the care required was to avoid collision with other boats and occasional skaters. We had taken our passengers on board; I taking the Governor, his wife, and one of her female friends; and the rest of the party being distributed between other two boats. At first we went slowly, confining our speed to about thirty or forty miles an hour. I led the fleet, and had previously desired that the others should attend to the course I sailed, so as to avoid confusion, and also to enable us to sail side by side and tack or wear simultaneously. We continued to perform all sorts of evolutions for about an hour. The sun was shining brightly, and the wind rose to half a gale. It was intensely cold; but the excitement, besides an abundance of furs and buffalo robes, kept us all warm. As our passengers became less nervous, and saw how completely manageable the boats were, even when sailing at a high rate of speed, they begged me to go as fast as possible. I shook out a reef, and away we went, more like birds flying than boats sailing. We came in stays again and again, went round and round, and jibed our sail with perfect safety, all moving together as if by one impetus. To amuse ourselves, we threw walking-sticks and other small articles to windward; and after tacking, we picked them up as we passed them when going at our utmost rate of speed. This sport continued until it was time to go home; so returning to the city, we landed our party, who after courteously thanking us for one of the most delightful days

sailing they had ever enjoyed, wished us good-morning, entered their carriages, and returned to Government House.

On another occasion, the ice happening to be in remarkably fine order, I determined to test the speed of my ice-boat against time. The day was bright and not very cold; so I took my wife and little one on board with me, as well as the clergyman of the parish, who expressed a wish to be present during the trial, proffering his assistance in timing our speed by his watch during each run backward and forward. I should have mentioned that we were sailing with the wind nearly abeam, our course being north and south alternately, and the wind being about west two points north. At first we went slowly, as I wished to test the quality of the track on which to sail. The first two miles were sailed in three and a quarter minutes; and the ice being found perfect, I shook out another reef, and we sailed our very best. We crossed the bay many times, the distance being about two miles. Our time varied somewhat, though not so much as one would suppose. When sailing with the wind on the quarter, we made the distance in a little less than two minutes; shewing a speed of about sixty-five miles an hour. When sailing with the wind a little forward of our beam, the time made averaged two and a half minutes; or forty-five miles and upward an hour. I think we sailed at times as fast when *on* a wind as we did when sailing with the wind more on our quarter, especially during heavy gusts. We put our boat away before the wind, to shew how nearly we sailed as fast as the wind travelled; and although it blew equally hard, when before the wind as formerly, our sail was sometimes quite flaccid, and between gusts the sheet was hardly taut at all; shewing that the momentum of the boat after a gust was at least equal to the speed of the wind.

It is astonishing how use reconciles persons, otherwise quite nervous, to this great speed. I have had ladies on board my boat who were at first frightened at the ordinary rate of sailing, and begged me to go more slowly. After a while, however, they were the first to entreat for more speed, 'Faster, faster still!' until we nearly flew. *X* The only danger in going so fast is running the leeward skate into a longitudinal crack. We can *cross* any number of cracks without a chance of injury; but if the lee-runner should get into a crack running in the same direction as the boat, it is ten to one something is carried away; or the sudden stopping of the boat causes all the passengers to slide away forward and on to the ice. But unless some one comes in contact with the mast, there is little danger of severe injury under ordinary circumstances. There are no seats, and as every one is reclining at length on the bottom of the boat—which is only about ten inches above the ice—they have not far to fall. I have sometimes sailed in heavy winds when, owing to the heeling of the boat, the ice was too weak to bear the great pressure of the lee skate; a cut through and sudden stoppage was the consequence, whereupon we all slid away forward over the bows. In such a case it becomes a matter of some difficulty to extricate the lee runner without breaking-in a large portion of the thin ice; and great skill and caution are required to prevent boat, crew, and all going through into the water. *X*

I recollect once I had been giving a sail to the governor of the Lunatic Asylum, a learned and gentlemanly M.D., but one of the old school. We had been arguing in a heated manner about the probable influence of phrenological development of an exaggerated kind on some of his lunatic patients. The Doctor stoutly denied all such influence as being quite unworthy of consideration. I opposed him, on the grounds only that where such development did exist of an exaggerated type, there were reasons to believe it should be taken into consideration. My opponent became very demonstrative and somewhat angry, and leaping from the boat as she rounded to near the shore, he fairly danced with excitement. We thought the ice would bear a team of elephants, it being nearly two feet in thickness; but unfortunately the spot the Doctor had chosen as the scene of his evolutions was near to a water-hole that had been cut the day before, and was covered over with a thin coating of ice. One step too far, and down he went to the bottom. Fortunately the water only took him up to the armpits; and a most ridiculous sight he was, continuing to rave and gesticulate, getting deeper and deeper every moment. At last he begged me to help him out; but this I declined to do unless he acknowledged the soundness of my phrenological statement. This he refused to do; and the argument waxed hotter than before, the Doctor affirming that 'in the water or out of it, wet or dry,' he could and would confound me and all such new-fangled ideas. However, the chilliness of the position proved too great for the heat of the Doctor's argument, and he finally gave in, shewing clearly that plenty of cold water thrown on a discussion did more to settle it than any quantity of heat and wordy warfare. I helped the good old Doctor out, and forced him to go to our house, where he drank a considerable modicum of excellent whisky, to keep out the cold and correct the dampness of his garments. A cab having been sent for in the meantime, I put him into it, and sent him home, a wetter and, I trust, a wiser man.

Poor old gentleman! he was highly educated, and a most agreeable companion. He is long since dead; but occasionally during that winter when I met him, I offered to get out the ice-boat and renew the controversy; but he always declined any such semi-aquatic disputes, and rarely ventured again on the ice.

GENTLENESS VERSUS FORCE.

THE seeming paradox, that gentleness is the greatest force in the moral world—a half truth to be accepted under limitations—has received numerous illustrations; chiefly, however, in the direction of unmerited suffering, calmly meekly patiently endured, ultimately achieving its own victory. The following incidents are of a somewhat different character, and may have their interest, as rather unique illustrations of the subject.

A gentleman in the west of England who kept a first-class boarding-school, became so imbued with the obligations of primitive Christianity, which he conceived to consist, not in any accommodation of their principles, but in following out to the letter the precepts delivered in the New Testament, that he had been known, amongst other things, to take off his coat on the highway

to clothe the naked; and never under any circumstances whatever did he turn a deaf ear to the appeal of the needy, if it lay in his power to satisfy their want. In the opinion of his neighbours and friends, all this led him into various extraordinary aberrations of personal behaviour; but nevertheless he was a gentleman and a scholar, beloved and respected by all, and against whom, save for his 'peculiarities,' not a word could be said. It is, however, in regard to the conduct of his school that we find the illustration of gentleness *versus* force. Following out the strict sequence of his ideas, he came to the conclusion that not only 'bearing one another's burdens,' but suffering for others—the innocent for the guilty—was the great Christian law. This took a peculiar form in the discipline of his school. The usual delinquencies arose, and the usual punishments seemed demanded. To pass these by was not his idea at all, but to mark them with all the demerit they deserved, and to meet out the due punishment to each offence. But, in pursuance of his belief, these punishments were not allowed to fall upon the offenders. He himself undertook every task imposed, and endured every punishment ordered throughout all the varied grades of discipline needed in the school! The most peculiar and forcible manner in which this took effect was in regard to corporal punishment, which became occasionally necessary, to mark the greater heinousness of some offence. This also he underwent, by insisting that the offender, or the boys generally, instead of being punished by him, should inflict the punishment *on* him! Strange results might have been expected from such strange modes of procedure; but the singular effect was, that it became the one anxious concern of the boys neither by any act of commission nor of omission to place themselves in such a position that a punishment merited by themselves should have to fall on their beloved preceptor, for this he had become to them in the highest sense. So far from such a course producing a vitiated set of pupils, the school acquired well-deserved renown for the moral style of the boys and for their excellent attainments; so much so, that it was rather sought after by the distinguished and wealthy; and many a man, not unknown to fame, would own that he owed much to the good foundation laid for him in heart and mind at the school thus referred to.

Our second illustration is also from school-life—this time in the east of England, offering a melancholy contrast to the preceding. The head master of the school had been specially trained for the work at a collegiate institution. After varied experiences as to different modes of discipline, he had come to the belief that the shortest, most decisive, and effectual form of correction, under *all* circumstances, was the cane, as a speedy method of solving the difficulty, and a punishment capable of being graduated by the occasion. Accordingly, as he entered the school each morning, the cane as the emblem of authority and punishment was ostentatiously brought forth and placed in a conspicuous position; and it would not be long before it was brought into requisition, either for lessons not learned or for personal ill-conduct. Thus the whole school-hours were generally varied with more or less infliction of corporal punishment—often, too often, not

only with needless, but brutal severity. This gentleman had an usher, whose principles and notions of discipline were the direct contrary of summary or undue severity; and if not amounting to those of our preceding illustration of vicarious punishment, were so permeated with the belief that love, mercy, and forbearance could do more than severity, that the daily scene in the school became a source of almost torture to him, so that he could scarcely resist the temptation at times of rushing upon the principal and wresting the cane from him, if not, in the heat of the moment, of paying him out with his own weapon.

Now what was the effect upon the boys of the system of prompt severity thus adopted? Nothing but entire demoralisation, and that to a degree scarcely credible. Though the sons of well-to-do parents, mostly of gentleman-farmers and the like, in the neighbourhood, with a sprinkling of boys from towns, they had become so lost to truth and honour, that to lie under all circumstances had become the habit of the school. Had anything gone wrong, the first boy interrogated would start some unblushing lie, and the whole school would adhere to it with the utmost pertinacity and ingenuity. Nor was there any particular in which they did not exhibit a callous indifference to all that was honourable and right. No appeal to any high motive seemed possible. It was the express desire of the principal that no minor or secondary punishments should be resorted to; whatever was wrong was to be reported to him, to be dealt with in the usual way, namely, the cane. With what soreness of heart, disgust, and reluctance this rule was observed by the assistant master can well be imagined. The situation at length became intolerable. Being bound to remain for the term, he resolved to break through the system at all hazards. Calling the boys about him, he told them with what grief and disapprobation he had witnessed the constant canings, &c., and informed them that henceforth he should entirely disregard the order to deliver them up to the tender mercies of the head master for any and every offence, and should look to them for such proper behaviour as would obviate all need of punishment. He pointed out to them the degrading condition to which they were brought, the superior honour of truth to falsehood, of noble, right acting under all circumstances, and impressed upon them that he sought to be their friend and helper, instead of a petty exactor and fault-finder. Whenever the too ready lie or feigned excuse for misconduct was apparent, he would appeal to them to be outspoken and true; that instead of anything being thus lost to them, they would rather be the gainers in additional self-respect and satisfaction.

And here comes in the further illustration of gentleness *versus* force. This willing relinquishment of the latter, instead of striking from under him all power of authority and discipline, and leading to anarchy, produced an absolutely opposite result, the effect of which was soon apparent in a nobler tone, almost a new life, throughout the school. To the complete astonishment of the head master, the discipline of the school became so vastly improved, lessons so well prepared, and all kinds of misconduct so decreased, that, apparently to his disgust, the occasion for the cane

almost ceased. The contrast of the condition of the school when under his own regime and that of the usher was a constant puzzle to him. At length an explanation became necessary at the close of the term, and here again gentleness as opposed to force received a further illustration. When the time came for the usher's departure, the head master—naturally an irascible man—exhibited meekness and patience, and begged his recalcitrant *sub* to remain with him upon any terms he liked to name; and yet, as he declined to promise a relinquishment of his own system, a parting was reluctantly agreed to. To add to the force of our illustration, it was remarkable that the most stout-hearted boys who had shewn most disposition to take advantage of the contrasted regime under which they had been placed, were the most affected on learning the result.

The instances we have given must perhaps be regarded as crucial experiments, not to be ventured on save under very special conditions, but nevertheless as illustrating our theme in a forcible, if singular manner.

THE WAY IN WHICH LIGHTNING DESCENDS.

SOME months ago, the well-known French Professor, M. Colladon, suggested a new theory as to the manner in which lightning descends. Instead of a perpendicular flash, as has been generally supposed, the Professor contended that it came down in a shower, driving along in multitudinous currents like a torrent of rain. Hence it is that trees are so liable to be injured, and persons who thoughtlessly shelter beneath them. The lightning, falling in detached streams, runs along the branches of the tree until it is all gathered in the trunk, which it bursts or tears open in its efforts to reach the ground.

Various correspondents have recently sent to the public journals instances illustrative of this theory. The *Times* Geneva correspondent describes a remarkable electric phenomenon which occurred at Clarens in June last. On that occasion heavy masses of rain-cloud hid from view the mountains which separate Fribourg from Montreux; but their summits were from time to time lit up by vivid flashes of lightning, and a heavy thunder-storm seemed to be raging in the valleys of the Avants and the Alliaz. No rain was falling near the lake, and the storm still appeared far off, when a tremendous peal of thunder shook the houses of Clarens and Tavel to their foundations. At the same instant, a magnificent cherry-tree near the cemetery, measuring about forty inches in circumference, was struck by lightning. The lightning was seen to play about a little girl who was gathering cherries within thirty paces of the tree, and literally fold her in a sheet of fire. Those beholding it, fled in terror from the spot. In the cemetery six persons, separated into three groups, none of them within two hundred and fifty paces of the tree, were enveloped in a luminous cloud. They felt as if they were being struck in the face with

hailstones or fine gravel; and when they touched each other, sparks of electricity passed from their finger-ends; at the same time the lightning could be distinctly heard as it ran from point to point of the iron railing of a neighbouring vault. Strangely enough, neither the little girl nor any one of the other persons concerned was hurt; the only inconvenience complained of being an unpleasant sensation in the joints, as if they had been violently twisted. The trunk of the cherry-tree was, however, as completely shivered as if it had been exploded by a charge of dynamite.

A gentleman in Rugby, writing to *Nature* shortly after the above, mentions the case of a tree struck by lightning in Stoneleigh Park. It was a fine oak, about forty feet high; and the lightning seemed to have struck, not at the top, but about two-thirds of the way up the main trunk, just where several of the larger branches came off from the stem. From this point to the ground the bark had been rent off along a strip about three inches wide; and through the whole length, the wood beneath the bark had been gouged out as if by a carpenter's tool, the groove made being about an inch wide and deep. The curious fact of the tree being struck apparently among the branches, at once suggested the theory of M. Colladon, that the electric fluid must have travelled, without visible effect, through the upper branches, and only produced disruption of the wood when the current was strengthened by the combination of a great number of separate streams. If this theory of the descent of lightning should eventually be proved beyond reasonable doubt, it would be of importance that, in affixing lightning-rods to buildings, their tops should be branched, each branch being smooth and pointed at its extremity, the better to conduct the subtle current into the main stem of the rod, and thus avert danger. It has lately been pointed out that it is not uncommon for the tops of lightning-rods to be ornamented with metal balls, and even to be tipped with a cap of glass. This, as Professor Tait recently explained, is as absurd as it is futile, and goes far wholly to neutralise the advantages sought by the adoption of lightning-rods. These, as above stated, should be smooth and pointed at top, and present as many separate points as possible to the descending fluid.

SONNET.

O NOBLE maid! When daylight sinks to sleep,
And weary waiting bids me close my eyes,
I fear lest gloomy visions may arise,
And drag me down to that unhappy deep
Where Love despairs, and Hopes and Longings weep;
But, ere they come, I reach a land of sighs,
Where sights and sounds are clad in quaintest guise,
And where I hear soft strains of music sweep
Among the shadows to my open ears,
When, out of loving lips I cannot see,
Float tender harmonies to dry my tears
With wondrous melody which comforts me,
Destroying all the ruins of my fears,
And lulling me to happy dreams of thee.

W. L. C.

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